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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Arjan P. Hamburger (Netherlands), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/49/L.8

Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its second session

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/190 of 22 December 1992, in which it endorsed the results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Recalling also its resolution 47/191 of 22 December 1992 on the institutional arrangements to follow up the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Reaffirming the need for a balanced and integrated approach to environment and development issues and the new global partnership for sustainable development, initiated at the Conference,

Having considered the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its second session, 1/ which was held in New York from 16 to 27 May 1994,

Taking into account the recent national, subregional, regional and interregional efforts and initiatives to promote sustainable development,

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1/ E/1994/33.

1. Takes note of the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its second session and endorses the recommendations contained therein;

2. Welcomes the communications regarding the implementation of Agenda 21 2/ and the action taken in many countries towards elaborating, as appropriate, national sustainable development strategies and action plans provided on a voluntary basis by a number of Governments and organizations at the second session of the Commission and encourages Governments to continue to share among themselves their experiences in the implementation of Agenda 21;

3. Underlines the importance of preparing and carrying out national sustainable development strategies, programmes or action plans, as the case may be, and to that end calls for provision of financial resources and transfer of technology;

4. Notes the ongoing work on the elaboration of sustainable development indicators;

5. Expresses its deep concern that the financial recommendations and commitments of Agenda 21, including those regarding official development assistance, despite an increase in private investment in some countries, are short of expectations and requirements and that the current availability of financial resources for sustainable development and the limited provision of adequate and predictable new and additional financial resources will constrain the effective implementation of Agenda 21 and could undermine the basis of the global partnership for sustainable development. In this context, expresses its concern that overall official development assistance has even decreased since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; 3/

6. Stresses the critical need for and importance of the provision of means of implementation, in particular to developing countries, especially those relating to new and additional financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technology to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, in order to assist them in implementing Agenda 21 and other decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

7. Stresses the role of the Commission on Sustainable Development, as a unique international forum for fostering multilateral negotiations and promoting action in the area of changing consumption and production patterns, calls on the Commission to promote the adoption of urgent steps to implement the relevant chapters of Agenda 21 related to the crucial issue of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, particularly in the developed countries, which not

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2/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), resolution 1, annex II.

3/ The report of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development shows a decrease by 10 per cent in official development assistance.

only constitutes the major cause of continued global environmental deterioration but also aggravates poverty and imbalances and, in that context, reiterates that national authorities should endeavour to promote the internalization of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account that the polluter should, in principle, bear the costs of pollution;

8. Notes the word done so far by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/World Tourism Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Environment Programme in the fields of trade, environment and sustainable development, underlines the need to ensure close cooperation and complementarity of work with the Commission on Sustainable Development and recommends that the Commission, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations continue to be appropriately represented at the World Tourism Organization Committee on Trade and Environment;

9. Stresses the importance of the decisions adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development, inter alia, on health, human settlements, freshwater, toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes, as concrete steps in the implementation of the sectoral clusters of Agenda 21;

10. Encourages the continuing participation of ministers in the sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development, including those responsible for development, planning, finance and trade in the high-level meetings of the Commission;

11. Calls upon the Commission on Sustainable Development, in accordance with chapter 38 of Agenda 21, to develop close and clear relationships with other relevant international organizations and entities, such as the conferences of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 4/ the Convention on Biological Diversity, 5/ and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, 6/ and the Global Environment Facility in order to increase its effectiveness in monitoring the implementation of Agenda 21 and other decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

12. Urges the international community, in particular the donor countries, to undertake efforts to further strengthen the funding capacity of international financial institutions, regional banks and other international organizations, and emphasizes that greater efforts need to be undertaken by them to effectively and demonstrably provide resources for the implementation of Agenda 21;

4/ A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I.

5/ See United Nations Environment Programme, Convention on Biological Diversity (Environmental Law and Institutions Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

6/ A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.

13. Recommends that members of international financial institutions take the necessary steps, through their respective governing bodies, so that their programmes and activities will better reflect Agenda 21, particularly in order to respond to the needs of developing countries;

14. Endorses the recommendation of the Commission on Sustainable Development to draw up a matrix of policy options and financial instruments and mechanisms that would facilitate the formulation of optimal financing strategies for each of the sectoral clusters under review;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to promote further the involvement of the High-level Advisory Board on Sustainable Development in the work of the Commission, through more direct involvement of the members of the Board, in their expert capacity, in the informal meetings of the Commission and in its inter-sessional meetings, as well as to arrange briefing sessions open to all interested parties to highlight the outcome of the Board's meetings, with a view to enhancing more transparency in its work, communication and interface between the Board and the Commission;

16. Underlines the need for balanced, transparent and coherent inter-sessional processes, which are participatory in nature, to facilitate the work of the Commission and its ad hoc working groups, and expresses its appreciation to the various inter-sessional initiatives of national Governments and international organizations;

17. Underlines the need for an effective follow-up of the decisions taken by the Commission at its second session and notes the commitments expressed by members to follow up their inter-sessional initiatives in order to contribute to a comprehensive review of Agenda 21 in 1997;

18. Notes the indispensable role that major groups play in the implementation of Agenda 21 and encourages them to contribute to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development;

19. Notes the work of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development and its task managers and invites the Secretary-General to make reports of the Committee available to the Commission;

20. Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all members of the international community, relevant intergovernmental organizations, agencies, programmes and bodies within and outside the United Nations system, and relevant non-governmental organizations.